DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 331 975 CE 057 877

TITLE	Community Linkage Plan. Final Report.
INSTITUTION	Ouachita Vocational Technical School, Malvern, AR.
SPONS AGENCY	Arkansas State Dept. of Education, Little Rock. Div. of Vocational and Technical Education.
PUB DATE	Oct 89
NOTE	22p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Community Cooperation; Community Support; *Coordination; *Corporate Support; *Facility Improvement; Facility Utilization Research; Postsecondary Education; Program Effectiveness; Public Relations; School Business Relationship; *School Community Relationship; School Involvement; *School Support; *Vocational Schools

ABSTRACT

A project was designed to maintain cooperation, coordination, and service between Ouachita Vocational Technical School (OVTS) in Arkansas and local businesses, industries, government agencies, military, and community-based organizations. Specific objectives were to improve community relations; increase campus involvement/commitment with business, industry, and community leaders; and improve industrial development activities in Hot Spring County, Arkansas. To address a community need for meeting space, OVTS altered an existing facility to provide a modernized meeting and training room with audiovisual equipment and other furnishings necessary for presentations. Community support was demonstrated through a fund raiser that raised money to purchase furnishings and equipment. The project developed procedures and assigned personnel responsible for use of the facilities, promoted the Community Room to the community, and evaluated project effectiveness by monitoring facility use and feedback from business and industry. The Community Room was well received by local businesses, industry, government agencies, and community-based organizations. It was in use 86 percent of the time. On-campus involvement of business and industry included regular monthly meetings of the Chamber of Commerce, tours by business and industry, and increased numbers of guest speakers in classes. (A brochure and forms related to use of the Community Room are appended.) (YLB)

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VoTech

Ouachita Vocational Technical School
Malvern, Arkansas

FINAL REPORT

Community Linkage Plan

Conducted By

Ouachita Vocational Technical School
P. O. Box 816
Vo-Tech Circle
Malvern, Arkansas 72104
Telephone: 332-3658

Ron Moore, Project Director

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In Cooperation with
Vocational and Technical Education Division
Arkansas Department of Education
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Funded under the Provisions of
P. L. 98-524

October, 1989

CE051877

FINAL REPORT

Community Linkage Plan

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ABSTRACT

Community Linkage Plan

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The cooperation of employers and other community leaders is essential in planning, implementing, and maintaining high quality vocational technical programs. Community involvement serves not only to stimulate relevant program development but also to provide a broad base of support for vocational education. In order to provide a catalyst for an effective collaborative effort between an educational institution and the community it serves, facilities at the educational institution were altered to provide a modernized, up-to-date meeting and training room to be used by business, industry and other entities that can provide valuable services and community insight to the school.

METHODOLOGY

The procedures of this project were as follows: 1) alter and upgrade existing facilities to provide a meeting/training room; 2) provide adequate audio visual equipment and other furnishings necessary for presentations; 3) develop procedures and assign personnel responsible for the use of the facilities; 4) promote the Community Room to the community; and 5) evaluate the effectiveness of the project by monitoring usage of the facility and the feedback from business and industry.

RESULTS

The Community Room was well received by local business, industry, governmental entities and community-based organizations. During the first six months of use, 111 meetings were scheduled and attended by 2,540 people. As many as three meetings a day have been scheduled. The Community Room has been in use 86% of the time since the date of the first meeting.

SUMMARY

Through the efforts of this project and the creation of the Community Room, a common bond has been established with local community and business leaders. A strong partnership between the community and Ouachita Vocational Technical School has developed. This partnership has not only provided the school with business/industry liaisons but has also greatly enhanced the school's image within the community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The implementation of this project has provided the essential catalyst for an effective collaborative effort between this educational institution and the Community it serves. The impact from this strong partnership has been tremendous. It is recommended that this project continue to be utilized in future years.

FINAL REPORT

COMMUNITY LINKAGE PLAN

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The cooperation of employers and other community leaders is essential in planning, implementing, and maintaining high quality vocational/technical programs. Employers need to be involved because of their knowledge concerning occupational needs and expectations, and employment opportunities. In return for their involvement, community participants gain an understanding of the vocational programs, the relationship of programs to employability, and the role of vocational education in the economic development of the local area.

Because of recent economic problems in Garland, Saline, Clark, and Hot Spring counties, local banks have found it necessary to close their community rooms. This has caused a void for local businesses, industries, community-based organizations and governmental agencies in our service area. They no longer have a facility for meetings, classes, or workshops. Ouachita Vocational Technical School saw this as an opportunity to become an integral linkage agent for the community, local business, industry, and government. By upgrading, modernizing, and equipping a community resource center and making it available to the service area, it is expected that it will attract key people to our campus, giving us many opportunities to in turn utilize local personnel, equipment and resources. This facility will also serve as a focal point for industrial leaders as they tour the area in consideration of the relocation of business and industry.

Effective community involvement brings to the vocational programs learning experiences difficult to find through books, lectures, and films. The traditional classroom environment, by itself, takes on new life when supplemented by the expertise of community members. All vocational programs, especially those faced with diminishing resources, need to effectively tap the energies and resources that the community offers.

PURPOSES

The success of vocational and technical education is very closely tied to the degree to which local citizens and institutions are involved in the vocational and technical programs. Community involvement serves not only to stimulate relevant program development but also to provide a broad base of support for vocational education. The purpose of this program improvement project was to develop and maintain a two-way cooperation, coordination and service between Ouachita Vocational Technical School and local businesses, industries, government agencies, military, and community based organizations, which will result in the pooling of resources and a cooperative effort to achieve common goals.

The goals of the project were as follows:

1. To develop a partnership with business, industry, government agencies, military, and community based organizations.
2. To become involved in a cooperative effort with local industrial development officials by providing facilities for orientation of prospective business and industry.
3. To provide a facility that will meet the current needs of the military for the purpose of orientation, training and retraining programs.

EXPECTED RESULTS

The project was designed to provide the essential catalyst for an effective collaborative effort between this educational institution and the community it serves.

Specific Objectives were:

1. to improve community relations with Ouachita and the surrounding community.
2. to increase on-campus involvement/commitment with business, industry and community leaders.
3. to improve industrial development activities in the Hot Spring County.

LIMITATIONS

Coordination of State Building Services and the bidding process interfered with the implementation of this project. The cost for the project was much higher than expected. Adjustments in the budget were necessary to complete the project. The alteration and upgrading of facilities took six months longer than anticipated therefore, data collected concerning the project is limited to a six month time span.

METHODOLOGY

Ouachita Vocational Technical School proposed to alter an existing facility to provide a modernized, up-to-date meeting and training room with adequate audio-visual equipment and other furnishings necessary for presentations. Community support for the project was demonstrated with in-kind contributions through a community fund raiser. Equipment and furnishings for the room were purchased with monies raised through this fund raising project.

In order to insure community support for the project, a fundraiser was held prior to the opening of the Community Room. Business and Industry was asked to donate products or services to be used in a silent or public auction. A Chili Supper and Bingo night was held in conjunction with the auctions. (See Brochure, Appendix A-1) Over $3,500.00 was raised with this project. Additional fundraising activities such as car washes, raffles and a Mexican Food Supper were also held. Through donations from business and industry and the fundraising activities, over $7,000.00 was raised to provide the Community Room with top quality furnishings.

The facilities and equipment were promoted to businesses, industries, government and military agencies, and community-based organizations by way of brochures, advertisements, presentations, open house functions, advisory council meetings and contacts made by the industrial coordinator, internship coordinator, director and other key personnel.

Project money designated for publicity was used for the development of notebooks. Five by eight vinyl notebooks, embossed with the picture of the school, were given to participants meeting in the Community Room. Paper pads inside the notebook advertised the Community Room. (See Appendix A-2) The notebook allowed the school to establish a positive and professional image with the community.

Procedures for the use of the facilities were developed by the school administrators and the general advisory council. Record keeping and maintenance is the responsibility of the business manager. The business manager and the school director's secretary are responsible

for maintaining a calendar for the purpose of scheduling and the documentation of facility usage. A reservation form (see appendix A-3) was developed to be used in conjunction with the master calendar. A copy of these reservation forms are maintained in a log book. Included on the form is information necessary for confirmation and follow-up. An Equipment/Services Check-list form (Appendix A-4) is used to reserve equipment or request services necessary for the success of the meeting being conducted.

Procedures and policies regarding the reservation of the community room by an interested party include the following:

1. All reservations should be made at least two weeks prior to the event being scheduled.

2. Reservations can be made by contacting the Business Manager.

3. The organization requesting the facilities will be asked to complete the Reservation Form. One copy of this form will be given to the Director's secretary for maintaining log book documentation. Another copy of the form will be given to the Business Manager who is responsible for maintaining the Master Calendar. Persons in charge of the activity will be encouraged to visit the facilities prior to the usage date.

4. The Business Manager will be responsible for completing the Equipment/Services Request form. Upon completion of this form, the Business Manager will be responsible for securing the requested equipment and contacting the appropriate personnel needed to provide services. Copies of this form will be given to the Directors secretary for documentation purposes.

5. Final confirmation of equipment/services should be made at least five working days prior to the scheduled event.

6. The person conducting the meeting should plan on arriving at the facility 30 minutes prior to the event.

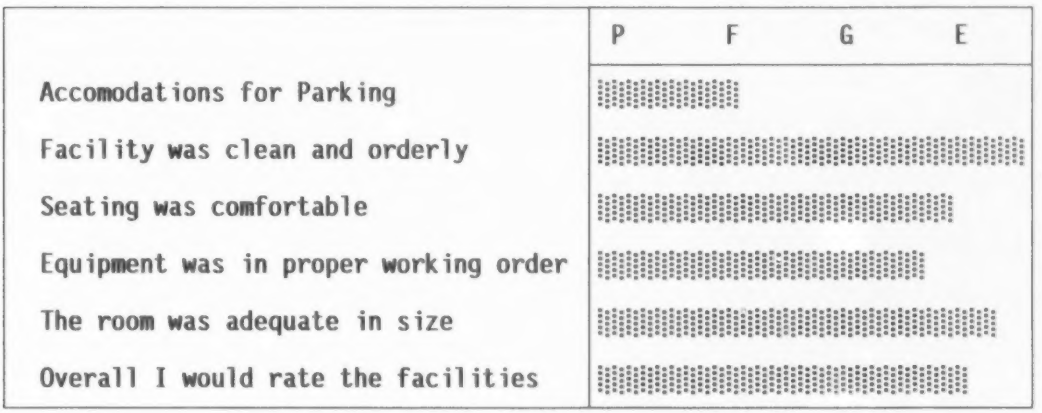
7. Upon completion of the activity an evaluation form concerning the equipment and facilities will be completed. These evaluations will be given to the Director's secretary for documentation purposes.

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

Facilities

Upon completion of a workshop or meeting, participants were ask to complete an evaluation form to determine if the facilities are adequately meeting the needs of the community. (See Appendix A-5) The compiled results of the facilities evaluation form were as follows:

FACILITIES

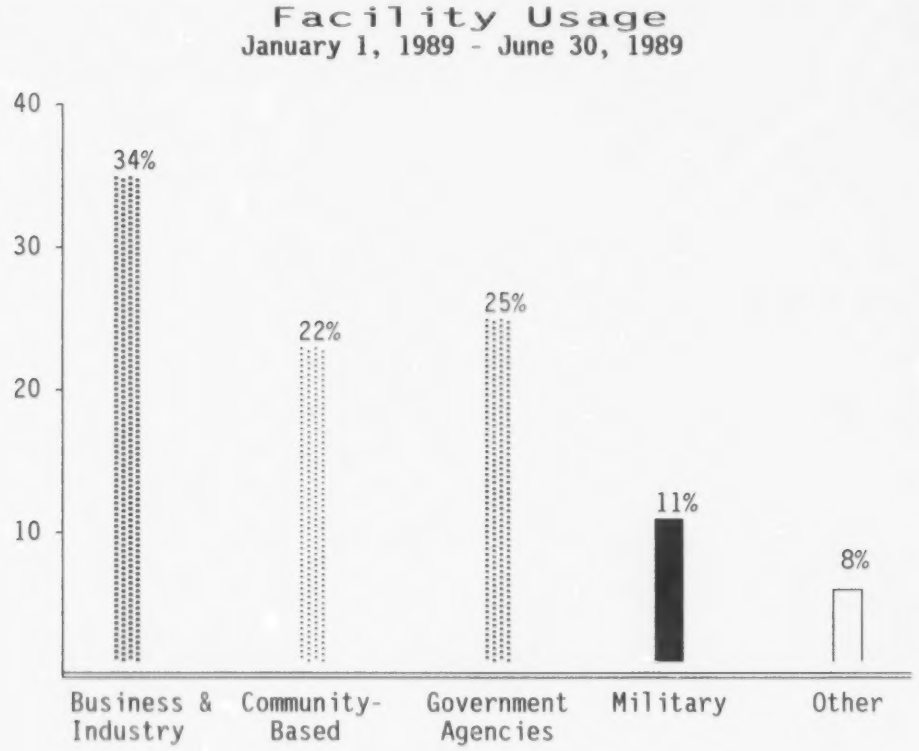


P - Poor F - Fair G - Good E - Excellent

Comments regarding the Community Room were complimentary in nature. Inadequate parking seemed to be a major concern for participants. Participants using the facilities were pleased with not only the surroundings, but also the friendliness and helpfulness of the staff. Many commented on the professionalism of the staff. Most felt that the Community Room provided a much needed facility for the citizens of Malvern and the surrounding area.

Usage

The Community Room was well received by local business, industry, governmental entities and community-based organizations. During the first six months of use, 111 meetings were scheduled and attended by 2,540 people. As many as three meetings a day have been scheduled. The Community Room has been in use 86% of the time since the date of the first meeting. Below is a breakdown of the types of organizations that have used the facilities in the past six months.



As depicted in the graph above, an excellent balance of organizations are aware of the Community Room and are making use of the facilities.

Overall Effectiveness of the Project

As stated previously, this project was designed to provide the essential catalyst for an effective collaborative effort between Ouachita Vocational Technical School and the community it serves. This project has provided the community with an excellent meeting facility. In return, Ouachita has been afforded many opportunities for positive exposure within the Community. This has strengthened community relations with the school. On campus involvement/commitment with business, industry and community leaders has increased. The Chamber of Commerce now holds regular monthly meetings in the Community Room facilities thus, allowing the school and staff to become eminently visible to these community leaders. Tours of this educational facility by business and industry have increased. Several Instructors have enhanced instructional program by increasing the number of guest speakers in their classes. Ouachita is considered an integral part of industrial development in Hot Spring County and is now included in development activities, such as the Industry Breakfast held at Ouachita recently. In light of the stated objectives this project has been successful in providing Ouachita with an opportunity to become a prominent force in the community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Linkage Plan described by this project requires a competent and effective staff to coordinate and schedule Community Room activities. The entire school staff should realize the benefits the school can gain by administering such a project. Because of the total involvement of the staff at Ouachita Vocational Technical School this project is meeting the stated objectives outlined in the proposal. Potential benefits from this

project should encourage this institution as well as other institutions to increase involvement with the local community by hosting meetings or by providing facilities to and for local business and industry. The impact from this strong partnership has been tremendous and duplication in other localities should be encouraged.

The Community Room

The Community Room project was made possible through a grant submitted to the Carl Perkins Program Improvement Fund. The purpose of this project is to develop and maintain a community center facility that will be utilized by Business, Industry, Government and other Community Based Organizations.

For more information concerning the usage of the Community Room, contact the School at 332-3658.

Thanks!

Ouachita Vocational Technical School wishes to express their thanks to the community for assisting us in our efforts to furnish the Community Room. We are indeed grateful.

Community Room Fund Raiser

OUACHITA
Vocational Technical School
Malvern, Arkansas

December 10, 1988

OUACHITA VO-TECH
CHILI SUPPER

4 P.M. - 7 P.M.

Enjoy the Food!

Stay for Fun!

BINGO

1 Card - 25¢ donation

5 Cards - $1.00 donation

Bingo will begin promptly at 7:00 p.m. Rules concerning the awarding of prizes will be explained prior to the start of the first game. Prizes will range in value of $25.00 - $50.00. A coverall game will be played as the finale. A prize worth aproximately $100.00 will be awarded for this game. We reserve the right to discontinue the Bingo Games at anytime.

Fun! -- Fun! -- Fun!

SILENT AUCTION

The items for the Silent Auction that are displayed may be bid on at anytime prior to the final announcement of the close of bid. This announcement will be made sometime during the actual auction. At this time you will have fifteen minutes to make final bid.

If you find an item that you would like to bid on, find the bidders sheet that accompanies the item. Make your bid, sign your name and place your phone number beside your name. All bids must be made in increments of 50 cents or more. You may bid on any item as many times as you wish.

AUCTION

The Auction will begin around 9 p.m. In order to bid on an item, you must register at the Auction Registration Table. All Bidders will receive a Buyer's number. All items will be sold to the highest bidder regardless of price. Items purchased may be paid for and picked up at the Auction Registration Table.

The Community Room

Ouachita
Vocational Technical School
Malvern, Arkansas 72104 — 501-332-3658

RESERVATION FORM
AGREEMENT FOR USE OF FACILITY

NAME OF ORGANIZATION_____
PERSON IN CHARGE OF ACTIVITY_____
ADDRESS_____PHONE_____
DATE OF ACTIVITY_____ TIME: From_____ To_____
NATURE OF ACTIVITY_____
APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF PERSONS TO BE IN ATTENDANCE_____
ROOM OR ROOMS REQUESTED_____
FURTHER EXPLANATION IF NECESSARY (Include such as need for special services, plans for cleanup, security, decorations, and refreshments ect.)

(attach additional sheet if necessary)

FACILITY SETUP REQUIRED: (Indicate number if applicable)

_____Blackboard	_____Chairs	_____Screen
_____Lectern	_____Tables	_____16mm projector
_____PA System	_____O/H projector	_____Slide projector

Other (Please specify):_____

CALCULATION OF FEES: (When applicable, fees will be charged to recover expenses incurred by this institution, such as cost for refreshments or consumable materials)
(to be completed by institution officials)

TOTAL FEE $_____

EXPLANATION_____

It is understood that our organization assumes full responsibility for the building and equipment.

SIGNATURE (person in charge of activity) _____DATE_____

APPROVED AND BOOKED _____ DENIED_____

DIRECTOR_____ DATE_____

COORDINATOR/HOST_____ DATE_____

COMMENTS:_____

EQUIPMENT/SERVICES CHECK LIST

DATE(S) OF ACTIVITY_____ TIME: From_____ To_____
NAME OF ORGANIZATION_____
ROOM OR ROOMS TO BE USED_____
_____
NUMBER EXPECTED TO ATTEND:_____
Institution's contact persons:
Before event:_____
During event:_____
Using-Organization's contact persons:
Before event:_____
During event:_____
The above mentioned organization will be provided with the following:

(Task completed)

_____Publicity _____
___Directory Board _____
___Press Release
Date/Time to be completed _____
Person responsible_____ Notified _____

_____Equipment
___Blackboard _____
___Lectern _____
___PA System _____
___Chairs (number of) _____
___Tables (number of) _____
___Over Head Projector _____
___Screen _____
___16mm projector _____
___Slide projector _____
___Other Equipment (specify) _____
_____
_____
_____
Date/Time to be completed _____
Person responsible_____ Notified _____

_____Refreshments (see reservation form)
___Coffee _____
___Iced tea/punch _____
___Continental Breakfast _____
___Hors d'oeuvres/snacks _____
___Other (specify) _____
_____
_____
_____
Date/Time to be completed_____
Person responsible_____ Notified _____
Additional information necessary to conduct the meeting: _____
_____
_____
_____

EVALUATION

Facilities

In order that Ouachita Vocational Technical School may better serve the training needs of your organization we ask that you complete the following survey concerning our facilities.

NAME OF ORGANIZATION: _____

DATE_____ TIME: From_____ To_____

Using the following key, read each statement and circle the appropriate response.

E - Excellent G - Good F - Fair P - Poor

****

1. Accomodations for parking	E	G	F	P
2. Facility was clean and orderly	E	G	F	P
3. Lighting was adequate	E	G	F	P
4. Seating was comfortable	E	G	F	P
5. Equipment was in proper working order	E	G	F	P
6. The room used was adequate in size	E	G	F	P
7. Overall I would rate the facilities:	E	G	F	P

Comments or suggestions for improvement of the facilities:

_____

_____

_____